

CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT
for
August 21, 2008
MEETING NO. 08-08

CONSENT AGENDA

APPLICATION:	HDC2009-00443
ADDRESS:	17 Wood Lane
ACCEPTED:	August 6, 2008
45 DAY LIMIT:	September 21, 2008
APPLICANT:	Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church
REQUEST:	Replace front & side exterior doors that were damaged in 1999 fire.
STAFF:	Cindy Kebba



17 Wood Lane

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval, given the finding that replacement of the missing front door and damaged side door is consistent with the City of Rockville Technical Guideline #3, Windows and Doors, and Secretary of Interior Standard #9.

DRAFT MOTION OF APPROVAL:

Finding HDC2009-00443 for replacement of the front and side exterior doors with in compliance with City of Rockville Guideline #3, Windows and Doors, and Secretary of Interior Standard #9, I move approval of the application.

BACKGROUND: The applicant requests approval to replace the missing front door and a damaged side door on the former parsonage at Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church with replacements in kind as part of the rehabilitation of the building.

Previous Requests:

HDC96-0087	Handicapped access ramp, 6/18/96 (not installed)
HDC2003-0285	Demolition of Cordelia House (structure at 19 Wood Lane owned by the Church, not approved)
HDC2006-00368	Installation of elevator in bell tower, approved 10/19/06
HDC2006-00368A	Modifications to west façade for code compliance, approved 2/15/07
HDC2006-00368B	Upgrade and relocate building electrical service to west side of church, approved 10/22/07

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HDC2007-00409 Pave driveway between church and former parsonage, approved 1/17/08
HDC2008-00414 Rehab Cordelia House, including replacement windows

Property Area: The entire church property, including the former parsonage, consists of 39,175 square feet (0.8994 acre)

Zone: O-2

Development Standards: The seven adjoining lots that are owned by the church were rezoned in 2005 to allow the church to assemble lots for redevelopment. The O-2 zone provides a transition between commercial and residential uses by restricting the size of buildings to a scale that approximates the residential zone on existing smaller lots. There is a maximum 25% lot coverage, minimum setbacks of 15 feet in the front, side and rear and a maximum building height of 35 feet. The work proposed in this application will not affect the development standards.

City of Rockville Permits Required:

HDC Certificate of Approval

BACKGROUND

Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.

- ✓ **Contributing**
- Non-Contributing**

Significance: To attract the best ministers, churches often built convenient houses for them nearby, but according to a 1912 survey conducted by the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church, only six out of 40 churches for black congregations in the county had their own, unshared, minister. Jerusalem was fortunate to have its own minister and a church-owned house for him and his family. Methodist minister Reverend James Cole led the congregation in cutting down trees and sawing them into lumber to build the parsonage at 17 Wood Lane in 1912. Reverend Cole was assigned to the Rockville circuit in 1923 and served Jerusalem and Mount Pleasant churches in addition to others. He died in 1926 while living at the parsonage. The building continuously served as a parsonage until the 1990s. Before being damaged by arson in 1999, the building was used as a women's day resource center and was called Cordelia House after the wife of a former pastor, Reverend Williams. It is the last remaining example of vernacular housing left in the urban renewal section of Rockville and the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District and a rare example in the county of a streetscape that includes both a historic church and its parsonage side by side.

The former parsonage retains its original form and detailing, with the exception of the stucco surfacing that was added over the original siding to both the church and the parsonage in the 1950s.

Background History: The parsonage is a rectangular frame and timber two-story vernacular structure with a slightly sloping flat roof. It was damaged by arson in February 1999. Since the fire, the building has been boarded up and unused. It is currently being rehabilitated by Ross Development and Investment, under the direction of H. Michael Schwartzman, Vice President and Director of Development. The Minkoff Companies is the general contractor.

The applicant received HDC approval for the rehabilitation, including replacement windows, on February 22, 2008. The HDC requested that the applicant return with exterior door selections as these had not yet been determined at that time.

VIEW OF AFFECTED RESOURCE:

Cordelia House rehabilitation in progress, August 2008

Side door location
(inside porch)

Front door location



DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.

The existing five-panel wood side door (inside the west side porch) is intact but badly damaged. The new replacement door will replicate it. (See application, Exhibit A).

The front door is missing. Members of the congregation who remember the front door from before the 1999 fire describe it as wood, with four raised panels topped with four lights (windows). This will be replicated in a new replacement door. (See application, Exhibit B).

Both doors will be standard sizes and will fit into the existing openings. New exterior trim will match existing dimensions and profiles.

MATERIALS:

The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.

Both doors will be all wood construction with a paint-grade Douglas fir/Hemlock blend.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent, including items such as cost, tax credits, options, and alternative plans.

The rehabilitation project may be eligible for tax credits. Pre-approval of the entire project is required by the Maryland Historical Trust for the state tax credit. However, the applicant will likely not seek the state tax credit as most of the rehabilitation costs will be paid by Ross Development. Any interior finish that is not covered by Ross Development would probably be ineligible because the MHT can not dictate the interior finish of any space that is used for worship. The rehabilitated parsonage is intended to be used for Sunday school classes, meeting and office space, as well as spill-over worship space when the church sanctuary capacity is exceeded. The project would be eligible for the Montgomery County tax credit only if the church is not exempt from paying property taxes.

COMPLIANCE WITH GUIDELINES:

Staff finds that the proposed alterations meets the City of Rockville Technical Guide for Exterior Alterations #3, Windows and Doors, and Secretary of Interior Standard #9, which states, "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."

Attachments: Certificate of Approval application, with attachments.